MIT's Koch Problem

I had always been proud of MIT.
Now I'm deeply ashamed and, frankly, afraid.

This may be long for a paper
but much shorter than a book:
23 Pages of Text,
16 pages of Citations & Appendix.
It's important; I hope you will read it.

This summary was compiled by Don Barnby
MIT SB '56, SM '57; Stanford MBA '71

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- While the Kochs hold conservative/libertarian beliefs, the issues discussed here are not partisan; they are issues that affect us all, Right, Left and Center.

- Although David Koch died in 2019, this paper refers to the Kochs in the plural and present tense because the activities and network of organizations described are the results, over many decades, of both David and Charles Kochs' efforts, ideologies and wealth, and they are ongoing today.

- To join with others to remove Koch influence from schools and universities, contact:

    - The Corporate Genome Project
    - https://corporategenomeproject.org/
    - email: ralph@corporategenomeproject.org

A "clickable" version of this booklet and its appendix
may be found on-line at:
www.tinyurl.com/mitkochproblem

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1 Overview

Two MIT alumni, Charles Koch and David Koch have amassed enormous wealth (over $116 billion between them) and a group of over 600 wealthy donors who have donated hundreds of millions of dollars to achieving their political agenda on behalf of themselves and big corporations [1]. They have also founded or funded a network of over 100 like-minded political organizations with benign-sounding names that conceal their extreme agenda (Appendix C).

The Kochs' activities are many and varied, but they reveal two central objectives:

1. the denial of climate change, leading to drought, famine, melting icecaps, species extinction, wildfires and coastal flooding, and increasingly violent storms

2. conversion of our democracy to minority-rule oligarchy by constitutional amendment that would override and weaken Congress and the voice of the citizens.

These efforts are backed not only by the Koch's billions of dollars and the large network of affiliated organizations, but also by the enormous power and wealth of thousands of corporations now set free by the Koch-supported Citizens United ruling.

The Kochs' attack on our democracy is real, relentless, and well-documented in the following recent books containing over 3,400 notes and works cited:

Democracy in Chains by Nancy MacLean [2] (Read last chapter first.)
Free Speech and Koch Money by Ralph Wilson and Isaac Kamola [3]
Dark Money by Jane Mayer [4]
Shadow Network, by Anne Nelson [5]
Kochland by Christopher Leonard [6]

This paper is a summary of information presented in these books along with the reports by the organization, UnKoch My Campus [7], and the work of numerous other researchers and journalists (Appendix A and B).

Through its close involvement with the Kochs, MIT is helping the Kochs accomplish their anti-science, anti-democracy agenda. This should be of serious concern to all members of the MIT family.

The concern is not that the Kochs' politics are far right, rather it is that the success of their activities would shift the power of governance away from the citizens' needs and toward the pursuit of corporate profits effectively eliminating our democracy and replace it with a constitutionally mandated minority oligarchy; it would effectively disenfranchise the citizenry.

Likewise, the Kochs' threat to our planet's climate is non-partisan; it threatens us all. All of us are at risk of drought, famine, melting icecaps, species extinction, wildfires and coastal flooding. The Koch network is a leading promoter of misinformation in order to limit action regarding climate change and environmental protection. To accomplish their objectives, the Kochs use philanthropy to infiltrate our universities (spending over $458 million at over 500 colleges and universities since 2005) [8]. Also see Section 12.

The Koch brothers are increasing the power and riches of the wealthy minority even at the cost of a habitable planet and democracy itself. The conflict is not along the political divide, Left vs. Right; it is democracy vs. an effectively authoritarian minority oligarchy. Most of us go about our busy lives unaware of what the Kochs are doing and what MIT is embracing -- hence this paper.

The destruction of our democracy for the benefit of the wealthy minority, and the denial of climate change are not merely the by-product of the Koch network's agenda; they seem to be its very purpose and intent.

The Kochs' values are inconsistent with and at cross purposes to MIT's stated mission: "To advance knowledge and educate students…(to) best serve the nation and the world in the 21st century." MIT economist, Dr. Daron Acemoglu has noted, "Democratic reforms do not help everyone in a society, and some people may prefer to let democracy wither for their own financial or political gain" [9]. I urge MIT and alumni to take note.

As a beacon of independent scientific leadership worldwide, MIT actively strives for a better world. But MIT's acceptance of donations from the Kochs and its visible praise of the Kochs is entirely wrong and contrary to MIT's vision. It is incumbent on MIT to take the steps necessary to uphold its stated mission, to explicitly counter anti-science propaganda, to refrain from glorifying individual donors, and to ensure transparency in all donations. MIT is failing in all these areas and is losing credibility; inexorably, MIT is becoming the face of the Kochs and providing cover for the Kochs' agenda.

2 The Kochs' Assault on Science – Climate Change

The Kochs have successfully promoted misinformation about climate change in order to deter Congress and states from taking action that could diminish the profits of Koch Industries' fossil fuels business – never mind that 97% of the scientific community believes that climate change is real and heavily influenced by human activities.

The Kochs' success in their attack on science is also evidenced by: the failure of Congress to take any significant climate action during the decade since the Koch-led defeat of the Waxman-Markey bill in 2010 -- the U.S. withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord for four crucial years -- continued melting of icecaps -- hot, dry summers, drought and raging forest fires – violent hurricanes -- rising sea-levels and flooding. Global climate change is upon us and threatens our very existence. Science News reports that in Boston "…sea level could rise by as much as three meters by 2100" [10]. MIT itself is at risk of flooding.

While generally staying under the radar, the Kochs have poured millions of dollars into fact-denial and disinformation regarding climate change; they are one of the most powerful and successful creators of scientific mythology [11][12]. Their denial of scientific truth and the spreading of misinformation for profit is unconscionable for MIT graduates. Alarm bells should be sounding throughout the MIT community.

As the environment degrades, we face a Koch network of astounding wealth and sophistication fighting to retain polluting industries causing immense harm to our planet's habitability and to spreading bankrupt ideologies across America in schoolrooms and the media.

3 The Kochs' Assault on Our Democracy

Virtually every political activity in which the Kochs engage seeks one way or another to reduce the voice and influence of ordinary citizens and increase the power and influence of corporations and the wealthy minority to transform our government from a democracy into a minority-rule oligarchy.

Quietly but relentlessly, the Kochs and their network of organizations (Appendix C) have pursued their agenda at all levels of government (local, state, and federal) lobbing effectively to enact laws favoring large and wealthy business, and to appoint their preferred ideological candidates to the president's cabinet, judgeships and key government posts (See Section 8, Kingmaking) in order to systematically dismantle our democracy and deprive the American people of their vote and their influence in Congress. Further, as we see today, they seek to curtail the power of the federal government and reassign it to more easily managed state houses.

Citizens United

Numerous Koch network affiliates, including the Cato Institute and Institute for Justice, filed legal briefs on behalf of another Koch network funded group, Citizens United, [13] in the Citizens United v. FEC Supreme Court decision which has resulted in an enormous flood of money into lobbying on behalf of corporate interests and wealthy elite that is now drowning out the voice of ordinary citizens.

Repeal of the 17th Amendment

The Kochs strive to take control of the Senate so that corporations and the wealthy minority can continue to block the will of the citizens' majority as expressed in the House of Representatives. Through their affiliate American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) the Kochs have been campaigning at the state level to repeal the 17th Amendment to the Constitution so that US Senators would no longer be elected by citizens, but rather chosen by a committee appointed by state legislatures – a method far more susceptible to corruption through corporate lobbying and money [14]. Eliminating such special interest corruption was the very reason for passing the 17th amendment in 1913.

If the Kochs succeed, citizens will lose their voice in the Senate; corporate interests and dollars will prevail, and the Senate can then block any legislation passed by the citizens in the House of Representatives.

Lock Corporate Bias into the Constitution via Article V Convention

Equally as dangerous as the repeal of the 17th Amendment are the Kochs' efforts to trigger an Article V Constitutional Convention to amend the Constitution to radically change the very structure of our federal government [15]. They could write their own preferred political/economic ideology directly into the Constitution where it would be essentially beyond the reach of Congress and the citizens, and simultaneously change the rules by which the Constitution could be further amended to lock-in those beliefs so that they become virtually impossible to alter in the future. Their libertarian biases include extremes of so-called free-market capitalism such as:

- Supremacy of private goods over public goods
- Primacy of property rights over human rights
- Freedom of business to operate with little or no government regulation.
- Free-market supremacy which would supersede the citizens' democracy.

Enshrining such political ideology in the Constitution may seem benign, but it is not; it would result in a biased Constitution that ensures the preeminence of business and corporate interests over the needs of citizens and render the government unable to adjust flexibly to a changing world. This effort to corrupt the Constitution is backed by staggering wealth. Guaranteeing the production of profit is not an appropriate goal of our Constitution.

Because the Constitution has supreme authority over all three branches of government, the Kochs effort would co-opt that authority for their own purposes; to accomplish their agenda they are clearly willing to sacrifice our democracy and its flexibility.

Any political ideology (conservative, progressive, libertarian, or socialist) once enshrined in the Constitution would become the ultimate authority over the laws Congress writes and the

judgements rendered by the courts; such would then take precedence over all other considerations and over the will of the citizens.

Locking unregulated free-market capitalism into the Constitution is as dangerous as locking in Marxist Communism. A congress locked into a single predetermined set of fixed economic rules would be akin to attempting a moon-shot without allowing any midcourse correction. It is a tragic error to believe that a single set of rules or ideology can adequately capture the vicissitudes of human experience and life in a changing world. No culture or country can survive a set-it-and-forget-it ideology.

Example: while maintaining a balanced budget is generally advisable, circumstances can demand otherwise. The United States' successful participation in World War II was achieved through enormous deficit spending. If Congress had been hamstrung with a balanced budget provision in the Constitution, Hitler may well have conquered Europe and beyond.

To convene an Article V convention the Kochs have chosen the route of securing such a mandate from two-thirds of state legislatures. This is an alternative route that avoids the usual open public debate in Congress and hides the process. Never in our history has a Constitutional amendment or convention been initiated by the states; it has always been accomplished in Congress in full view of the public. With Citizens United now making unlimited corporate money available for state lobbying, and with less press coverage at the state level, the chances of overhauling the document that has guaranteed our life, liberty and health for 247 years is now in jeopardy from moneyed interests. Nineteen states have already passed resolutions to call such a dangerous convention; twenty-nine others have introduced such legislation. That's 48 states with only 34 needed! The threat is altogether too real [16].

The Kochs' are trying not merely to change laws to benefit their business, but aim to restructure our government to permanently embed in it their own political beliefs.

4 The Nature of Our Democracy

Form vs. Ideology – Process vs. Politics

The Constitution is the supreme authority in our government; it establishes the *form* of our government to be a democracy (a democratic republic). That is the *process* of government. The Constitution pointedly does *not* specify any preferred political/economic ideology, but establishes Congress elected by and accountable to the citizens for that purpose.

The *form* of our government is a distinctly different issue from *political/economic* beliefs. That distinction is crucial. Enshrining *any* political/economic ideology in the Constitution

where it would be out of reach of Congress and the citizens would effectively neutralize Congress and destroy our democracy. The Constitution itself must remain free of ideological bias allowing such considerations to remain the purview of a free Congress.

The real threat posed by the Koch network is not political ideology but their apparent determination to neuter our democracy and the voice of the citizens for their own purposes by rewriting the Constitution to permanently change the form of our government from a democracy to a minority oligarchy.

That power of citizens to influence the government is the heart of our democracy, and Congress is the *only* part of government whereby the citizens have an ongoing voice to influence the laws that govern them (aside from electing a President). The other two branches of government take their guidance from Congress, the Judiciary interpreting its laws and the Executive executing them. Congress must be allowed to work freely and unencumbered, and without any mandated political ideology. That power of the citizens is precisely what the Kochs would diminish by repealing the 17th Amendment and by convening an Article V Constitutional Convention to rewrite the Constitution. For all their talk of freedom, the Kochs would in effect restrict the right of citizens' representatives to legislate freely.

The Constitution must remain neutral. No political or economic ideology belongs in the Constitution – ever.

Coercion

Every ideology employed alone without regulation and flexibility runs so counter to human nature in some manner that government coercion becomes inevitable. History shows that efforts to implement a single economic theory require the regimenting of citizens to force-fit them into the mold of the theory; think communism in the USSR and Venezuela, and libertarianism in Chile.

The central issue in each of these cases is more fundamental than the specific ideologies themselves. Dictators and oligarchs diminish the voice of their citizens by effectively neutralizing their legislatures and/or revising their constitutions so that citizens cannot alter the destructive economic path defined by a decreed economic theory. Such is the surest way to wrest power away from the citizenry. Once citizens lose control of their laws, their lives are dictated by the ruling few; is that not, in effect, slavery?

A conflict of ideologies does indeed exist in our society; however, the genius of our democracy is that it allows for legislative compromise and resolution without violence. Destroying our democracy to favor any one political ideology would be extreme folly.

Flexibility

Humans have an inborn desire to create a single *theory of everything* be it in physics, economics, or politics. In economics and politics, that desire can be disastrous. Fortunately, with a representative Congress, we need not choose a single political/economic ideology. We have in the U.S. achieved a stable community by employing a rich and changing blend of both private and public ownership and institutions, with Congress debating and adjusting that blend of Left, Right, and Center as circumstances warrant. The result has been far more robust than if we locked any single "correct" ideology into our government. That pragmatic flexibility is exactly what would be destroyed by locking a single political ideology into the Constitution beyond the reach of Congress.

Centuries of history have clearly demonstrated the need for flexibility by the succession of one economic system after another (*laissez faire*, Keynesian, monetarist, neoliberal, socialist, etc.). Each of these systems was born of the inability of then-existing systems to adjust to changing times. Pinochet's Chile is a case in point. The Kochs' efforts to lock a single set of economic principles into the Constitution is naïve and dangerous in the extreme.

Unquestionably, Congress is often inefficient, but it is far more robust than any rigid, codified ideology because it is dynamic and can adjust and change course as circumstances require, with a voting citizenry serving as the final arbiter. The freedom and flexibility to try various approaches to solve problems, the freedom to be wrong, and the freedom to recover – such is *true* freedom. Inevitably, rigid rules have unintended negative consequences.

Our choice as a nation is between being governed by: 1) a set of fixed codified ideological rules, or 2) a less efficient but flexible Congress that responds to changing circumstances and the will of the citizens. A single "perfect" unconditional ideology will never best serve any country.

5 The Nature of our Economy

A Narrowly Focused Set of Rules

Every economic ideology provides a framework of rules to employ regarding the creation, pricing and distribution of goods, services and profits. None, however, is an adequate recipe for all the issues government must address – not capitalism, not socialism, not libertarianism – none. Each will tend to extremes and run off the rails if left on its own without the moderating hand of Congress and the citizens. The role of government goes far beyond that of creating optimal conditions for private interest to maximize their profits and wealth. The near religious belief that the free market is the best solution social organization is a myth.

Misapplication of Free-Market Capitalism

Much can be said on behalf of *truly competitive* free-market capitalism; it accomplishes automatically and with great efficiency the myriad decisions and adjustments that must be made hourly in an economic system, but when free-market concepts are *misapplied* to other aspects of life and to government they can lead to disastrous social consequences.

A free-market economy is often erroneously cited as justification for accepting clear and glaring inequities and failures in our economy and our lives. The "religion" of free market supremacy serves as the grand excuse for eliminating government regulation. No wonder the Koch network desires to write such into the Constitution. Market forces and efficient business operation address only a portion of society's needs and must *never* be elevated above Congressional judgment to a supreme position in the Constitution. In fact, both free-market capitalism and corporations are *creations of government,* not the other way around. The free market is not a mechanism for arriving at truth; it is solely a pricing and allocating mechanism. Congress must lead in resolving the broader range of challenges our nation faces.

The mythology that "the market is always right" is naïve and is a popular fallacy that is extremely harmful. In fact, unregulated free-market capitalism failed miserably in the 1930's with the Great Depression forcing government to institute regulations on business. Now the Kochs would remove those constraints for all time by revising the Constitution. Democracy must never be subordinated to a so-called "free-market." Much of what is hidden under the guise of "free-markets" is really economic extortion by those with power. The Koch agenda is not for a free *competitive* market but is a perversion of that. It is corporate socialism and monopoly which gives *competitive* free-market capitalism a bad name.

Even the main architects of competitive free-market economics, Adam Smith, Fredrich Hayek, Karl Popper, and Milton Friedman have recognized the important role of citizen-controlled government and regulation [17]. The Koch network's agenda, however, would constitutionally tie the hands of government so it cannot regulate the pursuit of wealth by corporations and the wealthy minority.

Karl Popper noted that "… in a way one has to have a free market, but I also believe that to make a godhead out of the principle of the free market is nonsense. If we do not have a free market, then quite obviously the things that are going to be produced are not being produced for the consumer, really. The consumer can take it or leave it. His needs are not taken into account in the process of production. But all that is not of fundamental importance. Humanitarianism, that is of fundamental importance" [17]. In The Road to Serfdom, Fredrich Hayek wrote the ". . . use of competition as the principle of social organization . . . [may] even require certain kinds of government action." Also, he wrote "The ultimate ends of the activities of reasonable beings are never economic," and "Economic changes, in other words, usually affect only the fringe, the 'margin,' of our needs."

Nevertheless, James Buchanan's Public Choice Theory (an ideology supported by Charles Koch) is an explicit misapplication of Adam Smith's free market *economic* ideology into the area of politics and government. Buchanan and William Riker posited that the public sector should *not* be considered apart from the rest of the economy, but that politics and government form an arena in which the same principles and incentives apply as those that are relevant to the economic market [17]. That is demonstrably false. Free markets are *not* equivalent to a free society.

*Misapplying the economic concept of free-markets to structures of government and politics is a sleight-of-hand used (by the Kochs and others) to justify locking such a single economic theory into the Constitution, weakening the voice of citizens, and eliminating government regulation of business. Asserting the overriding supremacy of f*ree markets as a solution to social organization is a monumental deception.

A free competitive market is but one of several organizing principles of economic affairs. It is naive to believe that such a single tool applies in all circumstances any more than a carpenter can build fine furniture with a single tool. We have historically enjoyed a mixture of both private and collective economic policies (including public education).

It is the government's job, Congress' job, to choose the mix of private and public enterprise. Where a free market exists, it is the government's job to ensure that they remain truly competitive and on a level playing field. The Koch's agenda would embed free market ideology into the Constitution such that business and profits trump all else, rendering Congress unable to mediate that mix or regulate excesses.

Even when limited to the economic realm, "free-markets" only work if market power is distributed widely and real competition allowed to flourish. In the economy, the power must remain distributed with the consumers, and in politics with the citizens, instead of being concentrated with monopolies. We must have a government where citizens hold the power not corporations by way of wealth and rulings such as Citizens United. Increasing corporate power is the primary thrust of the Koch agenda. The ultimate battle is between distributed vs. concentrated power.

In some instances, free markets are entirely counterproductive. For example: businesses understandably aspire to more customers to increase sales and profits, but for enterprises such as prisons, arms manufacturers, and even pharmaceutical companies, more customers mean more prisoners, more violence, and more sick people. Schools, too, must remain free of political, ideological and profit motives. Likewise, if the free market can produce more profit by creating shortages, it will do so (think Enron's creation of artificial shortages). Unregulated free market forces can exacerbate racism if people’s preferences are for their own “kind” or gender. Some enterprises are inherently *not* suited to the usual business models, and citizen

oversight through government is essential. Glaring examples of free-market failure are its inability to adequately address global warming, public health and egregious wealth inequality. See Section 7 for other clear examples of tragic failures of poorly regulated free markets.

In summary: The concept of a free-market properly applies 1) only to economics and not to processes of government, and 2) only to *some* economic markets, and 3) then only under conditions of truly free and distributed competition.

Deification of Efficiency and Profit

Senator Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) stated it well in a speech at Catholic University, December 2019, "The market will always reach the most efficient economic outcome, but sometimes the most efficient outcome is at odds with the common good and the national interest." Efficiency sounds good but recall that slavery was highly efficient in terms of profit for slaveholders, and efficient health care can exclude the sickest citizens and those with pre-existing conditions.

Corporations are charged with the singular narrow objective of maximizing profits for their investors. Investors, however, are only one of several players in an economy. They must, indeed, be rewarded for their investment, but they are not, thereby, entitled to control our government, our democracy, or our lives any more or less than the other participants: labor and consumers.

Business pressure to generate profit is enormous and history has shown that free market capitalism will not self-regulate; the moderating power of Congress and government is necessary. Left on its own without regulation, free-market capitalism causes significant collateral damage as we witness today: falling real wages, increasing income disparity, poverty and homelessness, poisoning of our air and water, destruction of national parks, climate change, etc.

There is much to be done on earth that does not provide a financial return. The process of living together requires far more than extracting the maximum profit as efficiently as possible from labor and resources for the relatively few owners of capital. Our nation and resources should never become dedicated solely to business efficiency and profit. Making money is *not* the highest good for a society. Efficiency at all costs is too costly.

To put it bluntly, if the Kochs prevail, economic considerations and the pursuit of wealth for owners of capital would increasingly dominate all else under the Constitution and the law. The government's focus would shift from the establishment of a level playing field for the well-being of all citizens to the narrow well-being of business, including the freedom to privatize and monetize public resources for private gain (such as prisons and schools, highways, public lands, and national parks), a trend we witness today.

Putting economic incentives above all else is particularly dangerous now that mankind and industry have developed technologies which in pursuit of profits can lop off mountain tops and decimate rain forests in the blink of an eye.

Profit is an essential element of business, but it is not the supreme objective of life. The aims of life and culture *must be decided by the citizens*, not by a set of codified economic rules, the narrow interests of corporations, the wishes of a wealthy minority, or the demands of efficiency. Any economic theory employed must be held accountable to the citizens through an empowered congress. Embedding the Kochs' ideology into the Constitution would do immense harm to our country and the world. The Kochs fall far short of the wisdom of our Founding Fathers. If not malicious and greedy, they are simply wrong, demonstrably so.

6 The Situation is Worse than it Appears – Much Worse

A recent mathematical study by Dr. Bruce M. Boghosian, Professor of Mathematics, Tufts University shows objectively that a system of free markets, operating on its own without any redistribution of wealth (the Kochs' ideology), is inherently unstable and will, over time, by its very nature, tend inexorably to concentrate wealth into fewer and fewer hands and lead to a minority oligarchy [18].

These results are surprising, counterintuitive, and extraordinarily significant; they demonstrate that an unrestrained free market ideology is not the impartial system it was thought to be, but is inherently skewed toward the wealthy. The assumed "fairness" of free market principles is a myth, deeply flawed and inherently pernicious *by its very nature.*

This mathematical reality is not an argument against capitalism or an issue of politics at all, but an indisputable fact about the inevitable dynamics inherent in an unregulated system. It highlights the need to keep the Constitution free of political/economic ideologies so Congress can legislate as needed to maintain economic health and balance *based on results, not theory*.

Boghosian's finding is no trivial matter; it magnifies the consequences of the bias that the Kochs aspire to enshrine in our Constitution by way of a 17th Amendment repeal and an Article V Constitutional Convention. It further intensifies the harm they are promoting by way of Constitutional revision. This fact bears repeating:

A free market with zero redistribution is biased toward, and mathematically guarantees, a concentration of wealth into fewer and fewer hands leading to a minority oligarchy.

7 The Danger is Real and Happening Now

In science, we document observations, plot the data, then connect the dots to determine the underlying meaning. In reviewing the Kochs' activities, a clear pattern emerges; the dots

show clearly that the Kochs' network of organizations is on course to **disenfranchise citizens and dismantle our democracy.** To recapitulate, the pattern of the Kochs' objectives outlined in Section 3 is:

1) A flood of corporate money has already been unleashed through the Kochs' successful support of the Citizens United ruling which has overwhelmed citizen influence in Congress and in our elections by monied interests.

2) The Koch network's agenda would subordinate Congress (and the courts) and bind them to its own economic and business ideology by way of an Article V Constitutional Convention. (See Appendix B, Government & Politics)

3) The Kochs would subordinate Congress (and the courts) and bind them to its own economic and business ideology by way of an Article V Constitutional Convention. (See Appendix B, Government & Politics)

The common denominator of these is to disenfranchise the citizens, cripple Congress and solidify control by corporations and the wealthy minority. These campaigns are real, and well advanced. Such government restructuring goes far beyond simply passing conservative business-friendly laws.

Already, Congress is more beholden to corporations and big money than to citizens. For example, polls show clearly that issues like universal healthcare and some form of gun control enjoy overwhelming public support, yet it is virtually impossible to get Congress to take the action that the citizens favor. Money has already overwhelmed Congress' determination to represent the will of the people. Corporate wealth has cut to the core of our government institutions and civic life. The Koch's actions appear to be altogether intentional; if they succeed in their crusade to dominate Congress, the voice of citizens will all but disappear.

I urge the MIT community not to take this summary as the final word, but also read the books suggested as well as the items written by many others (Appendix A and B). Click to these easily in the digital version at **www.tinyurl.com/mitkochproblem**. The facts speak for themselves.

The Trap Snaps Shut

By quietly campaigning at the state level to repeal the 17th Amendment and to convene an Article V Constitutional Convention to bias the Constitution, the Koch network is setting an extraordinarily dangerous trap for the American people. The delegates to such a convention would set their own agenda, including the enshrinement into the C*onstitution of a political* ideology of their choosing. Consider this in light of the deluge of corporate dollars from Citizens United. There is nothing to prevent a "runaway" convention, perhaps even civil unrest.

If this campaign succeeds, the trap snaps shut; the structure of our government changes, and Congress and the citizenry will be powerless to act. The corporatization of our country will be complete, and the government will become a constitutionally mandated oligarchy responding above all else to the desires of corporations. The Kochs' political ideology, enshrined in the Constitution, would in effect become the law of the land and hold sway over all three branches of government.

Legislation passed in the citizens' House of Representatives would be easily blocked by a Senate appointed by the states and beholden to corporate (Citizens United) money and the wealthy minority. Democracy would vanish. Private enterprise would take precedence over public enterprise. Our laws and lives would then necessarily serve the interests of corporate America; public institutions such as schools, prisons, parks, utilities, and public transportation would be easily privatized and monetized. Government (and schools) would become the handmaiden of corporations and the wealthy minority in their drive to extract more and more profit from the earth's resources and labor; Congress and citizens would become impotent.

Examples of What to Expect if the Kochs' Minority-Government Agenda Succeeds

Even without the Kochs having yet achieved the full power they seek; *we have already seen a* clear preview of what to expect if their extreme free-market capitalism and unregulated corporatist ideologies become locked in the Constitution. As Winston Churchill said "However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results.". Here are some specific examples of results:

Opioid Addiction – Close to 500,000 deaths: In pursuit of profit under poorly regulated free market capitalism, Purdue Pharma's products caused widespread opioid addiction and close to 500,000 deaths [19].

Flint, Michigan Water Poisoning – 14,000 Children at Risk: Guided by recommendations from an offshoot of the Koch supported Mackinac Center for Public Policy, Flint privatized its municipal water supply and switched it to the polluted Flint River to save five million dollars and risking brain damage for 14,000 children [20] – a *savings of $357 per child*.

Boeing 737 Max – 503 Dead: Lax government regulation and Boeing's relentless push for profit led to 503 deaths in two 737 Max airliner crashes [21].

Mylan's EpiPen – 461% Price Increase: Between 2007 and 2015, Mylan Pharmaceuticals raised the price of its patent-protected lifesaving EpiPen injectors by 461% while the CEO's compensation increased 671% and its stock price tripled. EpiPen sold for $318 while costing $5 to make – a natural outcome of unregulated free-market pricing [22].

Insulin Price Gouging – 500% Markup: In 2016 the price of insulin, a lifesaving drug relied on by 30 million Americans doubled from $2,864 to $5,705/yr. with a 500% median

price increase resulting in widespread hardship and death – unregulated free-market pricing (extortion) in action [23].

Privatize "Everything": The Kochs ideology would privatize every possible public institution such as schools, prisons, public health facilities and even public lands; national Parks would become subject to mining and drilling exploitation. [6]. For 47 years Charles Koch has campaigned to privatize the US Postal Service. (See Appendix B, Government and Politics, "The Billionaire Behind Efforts to Kill the U.S. Postal Service") [24].

Bottom Line

The Kochs are dangerous *not because of their political bent* but because, backed by their enormous wealth, they are:

1. Denying the effects of climate change and risking destruction of our habitable planet and culture, and

2. Seeking to amend and rewrite the Constitution to embed a *single political view* into an otherwise neutral document so that such ideology is virtually impossible to challenge by Congress or the citizenry regardless of the damage it may do.

8 The Kochs' Strategies and Methods

A Stealthy, Well-Crafted and Relentless Campaign

The tactics of the Kochs' efforts are all too familiar: deregulate the corporate sphere, privatize the public sphere, and lower taxes on the wealthy; pay for these by cuts in public services – all are proper topics for a free Congress to address, but never enshrine in the Constitution.

The architect of the Kochs' strategy, economist James Buchanan, stated that if the public realized the implications of his ideology and strategy, they would reject them [2]; accordingly, secrecy has long been an essential aspect of the Kochs' programs. Buchanan emphasized that his goals could be achieved only through a Constitutional revolution. For decades the Kochs have quietly pursued a well-organized under-the-radar campaign at state and local levels and out of the news and public eye so that citizens remain unaware of the impending danger. Step-by-step the Koch network is relentlessly transforming and corporatizing the nation one state at a time, one school district at a time.

Koch Resources and Infrastructure

Staggering financial resources including:

- Breathtaking wealth: combined personal asset in excess of $116 billion before David's death (more than the GDP of about 70% of the world's countries [25].

- Koch Industries' revenue of over $125 billion/yr. [26].
- The immense financial resources of thousands of like-minded corporations which are now unleashed by the Citizens United ruling.

To implement their agenda and camouflage their activities, the Kochs have supported:

- a lobbying and political influence machine without parallel in modern America.
- a vast interlocking network of over 130 affiliated organizations (Appendix C) [27].
- a constellation of ideological think-tanks (Appendix C),
- over 320 ongoing university-based programs,
- over 700 wealthy donors who contribute tens of millions of dollars to such causes [1].

The Koch network constitutes an immense army of wealthy organizations already on the move to overwhelm our democratic form of government. Even after the Kochs are gone, these well-endowed institutions and actors will continue their unrelenting and crippling assault on our democracy.

The Koch Targets

The Kochs' lobbying and other activities reach deep into the heart of America's institutions and political life, from local school boards and city councils, up through state governments to virtually all branches of the federal government. Their money is buying carefully orchestrated influence virtually everywhere:

State and local laws	Elections: local, state, federal Local
school boards	City councils
K-12 classrooms	Judgeships
School textbooks and lesson plans	Cabinet appointments
Colleges/Universities	Congress
Media	

The Kochs' Specific Methods

The Kochs and their network of organizations are employing a multitude of methods to spread their destructive ideology and attain their objectives:

College Philanthropy: The Kochs have weaponized philanthropy to infiltrate respected universities and colleges across the country to spread their ideology and influence through faculty appointments, endowed professorships, research centers, programs of study, and curricula [3]. They have marqueed their name (and by association their ideology) on buildings and programs to burnish their reputations, and further their ideology. The Kochs have spent over $450 million at over 550 Universities and colleges seeking influence wherever they can over hiring and curricula, particularly in economics, political science, history. and philosophy, and law (See Section 12) [8]. That is 21% of the 2,618 accredited 4-yr colleges and

universities in the United States. They have supported faculty across the country to transform the intellectual Landscape. F. A. Hayek stated it well: "Experience indicates once a great body of intellectuals have accepted a philosophy, it is only a question of time until those views become the governing force of politics." [17].

Education and Textbooks – Kindergarten Through High School: Koch-supported Americans for Prosperity (AFP) has worked to infiltrate and influence primary and secondary education by way of local school board elections and several Koch-funded research centers have engaged in campaigns to influence curricula at the K12 level. The Koch network has also spent decades advocating for reduced taxes, which would subsequently strip funds from K12 schools across the country and advocating their replacement with private charter schools. The 2018 Koch Donor Network Meeting committed $400 million to the midterm campaign focused on breaking teachers' unions and gutting and privatizing public education, [28]. Further, they recommend and even write textbooks and prepare canned curricula and ready-to-go lesson plans for teachers to use in history and economics classes to present a view of culture and the economy that is severely unbalanced and biased toward their corporatist ideology, often subsidizing these biased materials for underfunded and cash-strapped school districts (i.e., Indoctrination not education).

Lobbying: The Koch network engages in massive lobbying at federal, state, and local levels to install corporate-biased ideologies. As detailed earlier, the immense power of Koch lobbying is demonstrated by their success in securing the Citizens United ruling, and also by thwarting the broadly popular *bipartisan* Waxman-Markey climate bill in the Senate and opposing highly popular legislation for health care insurance [29]. The Koch network pledged to spend $889 million in the 2016 election and ever more in 2020, pushing the estimated total to $1 billion for state and federal candidates [30]. ProPublica reports that Supreme court Justice Clarance Thomas has twice attended Kock network donors summits, giving a talk in California to billionaires assembled to support Koch's agenda. At a Florida summit Gini Thomas was appointed by the network's Federalist Society to lead a lobbying effort on behalf of Trump's judicial nominees

Judicial "Reeducation" Seminars: The Kochs are engaged in reshaping our nation's judiciary to build up a network of judges and laws that allow perpetuation of corporate-first policies. Their affiliates, The Federalist Society and Foundation for Research on Economics and the Environment (FREE) have established a grading system of judges to measure fealty to their brand of free-market economic theory. Judges scoring poorly are targeted for removal through well-funded recall campaigns or for "reeducation" through free junkets to the Law and Economics Center at George Mason University, which has trained over 4,000 state and federal judges from all 50 states in the Kochs' extreme free market economic principles [6] (quite significant given that there are only 1,770 authorized judgeships).

Skewing Elections: Koch network affiliate American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) develops and promotes strategies and legislation to dismantle our democracy and

skew elections through suppression of citizen influence in Congress by methods such as thwarting voter registration, gerrymandering, closing polling places, purging voter rolls, and enacting voter ID laws -- activities rampant today [31].

Kingmaking: Koch network affiliates, Americans for Prosperity, Tea Party Patriots, and Tea Party Express, as well as the Federalist Society, screen candidates and keep rosters of ideologically "qualified" individuals to recommend for government appointment to judgeships, cabinet secretaries, and White House appointments and other key posts. These individuals are chosen primarily for their fealty to the Kochs' extreme corporatist ideology over professional qualification. About half of President Trump's initial Cabinet came from the rosters of individuals recommended by Kochs' network of affiliate organizations, the Kochs have been remarkably successful [32].

Prior to the 2020 election, more than 28% of active federal judges were appointed by Trump [33]. President Trump used the Kochs' hard right Federalist Society and Heritage Foundation exclusively to vet justice recommendations (bypassing the traditional American Bar Association) [34]. Samuel Alito, Clarence Thomas, Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh are all members of the Federalist Society and Chief Justice John Roberts is listed in their directory as serving on their Steering Committee.

Misinformation and Misdirection: Just as big tobacco did with smoking, the Kochs have spent millions on a relentless campaign to sow doubt regarding climate change.

The Kochs frequently employ the words "freedom," "liberty" and “free economy” and “free markets” to make their ideology sound more palatable to the average citizen. But these do not mean freedom for citizens to enact laws which they deem appropriate in Congress or state legislatures, or the freedom for labor to organize; instead, the Kochs' vision of freedom is to allow corporations to operate with little or no government regulation or community accountability. By that standard even a monopoly or subsidized market can be defined as free *provided it is free of regulation*. Free markets and a free society are *not* the same.

State Capture: For decades the Kochs have been quietly but pointedly building support at the state levels to control legislatures, governorships, and courts to gain the power needed to convene a Constitutional Convention, to Gerrymander voting districts, and control school curricula, etc. Koch organizations have supplied states’ legislators, typically short of cash and staff, with readymade model legislation that enshrines their ideologies into law. By doing so, they gain the ability to covertly influence local and national policy, even certification of national elections. These efforts have been spearheaded by Koch-funded ALEC.

Overton Window: The Kochs employ the Overton Window technique whereby their ideology is woven gradually and stealthily into the minds of citizens, particularly students. This technique normalizes the unthinkable gradually shifting the baseline of opinion so that

people come to accept formerly unpalatable ideas as a new norm, crowding out critical thinking, and moves the climate of opinion toward acceptance of the Kochs' political ideology – an ideology which erroneously posits that free-market economic concepts applied to government and politics will result in a free society. Whitewashing their name and normalizing their ideology at MIT and other universities is part of that strategy.

9 The Nature of the Kochs and their Network

Charles and David Koch are reportedly quite personable, but throughout their lives they have shown themselves to be quietly and unrelentingly ruthless. Despite their philanthropy, or perhaps because of it, the Kochs are dangerous in the extreme. Time and again they have shown that they appear to be dishonest in their pursuit of wealth and power.

On August 24, 1996, Danielle Smalley and Jason Stone were burned to death in a massive explosion of a badly corroded Koch Pipeline Company pipeline in Lively, Texas. The court found Koch Industries guilty of not just negligence but of malice too, because it had known about the extreme hazard its decaying pipeline had posed. A former employee of Koch Industries, Kenoth Whitstine, testified in a deposition that when he brought concerns to his boss about another corroding pipeline, he was told that it would be cheaper to pay off damages from a lawsuit than make repairs [4]. The jury made the largest wrongful death award or record ($296 Million) [6].

In the late 1999 Koch Industries was found guilty in federal court of falsifying 25,000 documents and stealing oil from Indian reservations in Oklahoma yielding $10 million/yr. in profits [4][6]. In the penalty phase Koch settled by paying $25 million.

In 2000, Koch Industries, like Enron, traded in the manipulated California electricity market. It lobbied heavily and successfully to exempt such trading from regulation, a loophole that allowed the gaming of that market [4][6].

These are well established and documented facts involving two alumni whom MIT continues to glorify. Draw your own conclusions about their ethics.

Further information about the Kochs can be found in the Appendix (particularly, The *Koch Business Practices* under "Relevant Articles.")

10 MIT's Complicity

The Kochs are deeply entwined in the affairs of MIT. David Koch was a Life Member Emeritus of MIT's Corporation Board. The Kochs have contributed heavily to MIT, and the Institute has embraced them and, by association, their beliefs and agenda.

This is not to suggest MIT has not made outstanding use of the Kochs' largess, or that the furtherance of the Kochs' agenda is MIT's explicit intent, yet MIT's involvement contributes to the Kochs' credibility as they deny our planet's climate change and fund an agenda that dismantles our democracy. MIT has been bought and paid for -- its integrity severely compromised.

It is unconscionable that MIT engineers would use their abilities to deceive and confuse the world and scramble the truth for the purpose of profit, and it is worse that MIT would enhance the reputations of such alumni by taking their money and boosting their image; MIT is an enabler.

Koch Presence at MIT (includes the following)

- Koch Institute for Integrative Cancer Research
- Koch School of Chemical Engineering Practice
- David H. Koch Child Care Center
- At least 4 Koch endowed professorships:
  Materials science & engineering -- chemical engineering – biology -- biological engineering,
- Koch Institute Public Galleries
- Koch Café

Transparency of MIT's Philanthropy Agreements

It is not clear that the philanthropy agreements between the Kochs and MIT meet the highest academic standards of independence. Given the recent debacle with donations from Jeffrey Epstein, MIT's community has reason to be skeptical of the neutrality of past Koch donations. MIT has demonstrated serious lapses in ethical and academic processes regarding donors. Only far-reaching and iron clad reform can remedy MIT's besmirched integrity.

Discovery in public records and lawsuits have shown that Koch philanthropy at other universities has had strings attached. Examples are George Mason University, Florida State University, and University of Arizona. [35].

Burnishing the Koch Image

While transparency of the Kochs' philanthropy agreements is one issue; the use of the Koch name at the Institute is another. MIT has glorified the Kochs by emblazoning their name prominently on buildings across the campus, silently but forcefully affirming the Kochs name and ideology day and night, and it does so with the massive weight of MIT's reputation behind it. Why would MIT do this? Let's be honest -- money.

Featuring the Koch name in the Institute's affairs is not benign; it normalizes the Koch ideology in the same subliminal manner that the Confederate flag serves the ideology of slavery

and white supremacy. In addition to its marquee display on buildings the Koch name is also embedded in the official titles of academic and research centers, programs, academic chairs, professorships, scholarships and fellowships. Accordingly, their name gets included in authors' bylines and texts and is distributed widely on scientific papers that emanate from these "Koch" entities, allowing the Kochs to piggyback on the work of MIT's outstanding scientists for their own aggrandizement, buying them a halo of respectability.

MIT's silence and lack of action in the face of the Kochs' destructive agenda amounts to tacit approval and complicity. The damage to the earth's climate and to our country's democracy are far more serious than MIT's association with Jeffry Epstein or with slavery.

Particularly in this age of news falsification and deception for profit, the truth is a commodity far more precious than the money that the Kochs provide MIT. David Koch's eulogy was overflowing with praise, yet was disingenuous by virtue of bias and omissions; it was not worthy of MIT [36]. There is no way to spin this; MIT is covering for the Kochs.

MIT must remain a place where truth is revered. What does MIT stand for? If we cannot trust the integrity of MIT, what can we trust? This issue goes far beyond accepting the Kochs' philanthropy or MIT's ability to fund research or erect buildings and expand. It speaks to the kind of world we want to live in. MIT has tremendous moral weight; in which direction will MIT throw it? The Board of the MIT Corporation must decide. MIT must not be for sale to the highest bidder. To its credit, MIT has historically refused to grant honorary degrees; likewise, its buildings and programs should not be billboards for any political agenda.

11 Call for Action

The twin dangers fostered by the Koch network are real; the evidence is all around us today, and the harm to our civilization will last many lifetimes if not centuries. Time is up. Understanding the real-life results of the path we are on goes beyond just knowing it in our heads to knowing it in our hearts and fiber so that it moves us to action, to take risks. It is in our hands.

Evaluating the Excuses

Those who would do nothing can always find excuses:

- Excuse: "Koch's money has allowed MIT to do outstanding research."
  Those benefits, however, are vastly outweighed by immense damage to our climate and the destruction of our democracy -- activities in which MIT now shares responsibility. ***No technology that MIT develops with the Koch's philanthropy will matter much without a habitable planet and a healthy functioning democracy.***

- Excuse: "A university must remain a place of free open political discourse where both sides are presented."
  However, for profit and power the Kochs take advantage of Americans' innate and laudable tolerance for various political beliefs while aiming their ax at the very root of our democracy and our existence on the planet. This goes beyond politics; the Kochs seek to undo what it took a bloody revolution to accomplish. MIT has taken Koch money and looked the other way; the Institute is being used.

- Excuse: "The Koch entanglement is too deep or costly to reverse."
  Yet other universities have done so, for example, Wake Forest University and Suffolk University and the push-back at Brown University [37]. At MIT we do the difficult thing every day. What is the cost and likelihood of reversing climate change, or wresting our democracy back once it has been stripped from the Constitution?

- Excuse: "The Kochs have 'cleaned up their act.'"
  They have not. The Kochs have consciously and cynically softened their presentation and "rebranded" only because they have been exposed, but their objectives remain constant, their determination relentless, and their agenda thoroughly incompatible with MIT's values, and with democracy.

- Excuse: "Voting on the Corporation Board to part ways with the Kochs may be hazardous to one's resume or career trajectory."
  The adage "Go along to get along" has no place here. As a respected leader of MIT, each board member must have the courage and spine to take the personal risk of doing what is right for MIT, for our country and for our world, by terminating the Koch-MIT relationship now. Let knowledge and awareness lead the way over fear and cowardice. Now is not the time for head-in-sand denial; the stakes are existential.

- Excuse: "Breaking the Koch-MIT connection will not, by itself, end the powerful drip-by-drip attack of the Koch network on our climate and our democracy."
  It is, however, an important part of the actions necessary to do so.

- Excuse: Terminating all giving to MIT as an alumnus seems disloyal."
  The path that MIT has chosen is a betrayal of our trust and even its own mission statement.

Given what is at stake, the excuses are shameful and unworthy of the MIT of which we all are proud. MIT has two fundamental assets: its talented community and its reputation for integrity. MIT has the stature to publicly call out the Kochs for the harm they are doing and to take the lead for a better world. It will be to their everlasting credit if they do.

What MIT Must Do

MIT, my alma mater, is clearly furthering the Kochs' agenda. It is understandable that the Institute would accept donations from two wealthy alumni, but now that the true mission and effect of that philanthropy is clearly understood, it is time to break away. This will not be accomplished easily or perhaps without significant financial cost, but it is necessary.

The Institute has shown that it can have the courage to address its errors head-on as with the issues of slavery and Jeffry Epstein. Those horrific events are in the past, but MIT's honoring of the Kochs is current and ongoing, and the Institute has an opportunity to help curtail, now, in real time what may be among the greatest disasters civilization has ever faced *before* more damage is done. Other universities have done so. This is not a matter of technology; it is a matter of *will,* the will of each of its Corporation Board Members. What the board does matters. It is not enough to merely "study" the problem; MIT's Board must act clearly and forcefully and sever MIT's connections with the Kochs and their destructive agenda. If they do, they will perform an enduring service to MIT and the world. This challenge is *worthy* of MIT.

If MIT is to remain a beacon of scientific rigor and academic freedom, it must acknowledge that their involvement with the Kochs is harmful to humanity and:

- Remove the Koch name from all professorships, scholastic chairs, and academic programs, scholarships, MIT organizations and buildings.
- Release to the public *all* gift and grant agreements, including the terms of such donations from all Koch entities and their network organizations (past and present), and establishing a bullet-proof policy for reviewing and accepting future private donations;
- Refuse to accept any Koch (and Network) related money that has strings attached.
- Disinvest entirely in Koch-related businesses.

What the MIT Family Can Do -- Must Do

The solution to MIT's Koch Problem falls to MIT's corporate board; they will decide on which side of history MIT will be counted. You and I, however, and the entire MIT family, *are* the history of MIT, and history is happening right now. It is up to us all, in our time – at *this* time – to put an end to all Koch involvements with the Institute. Time is short – only a few more state votes to lose our democracy; only a few tenths of degrees of warming for the planet.

If we, the MIT family (directors, faculty, students, alumni, staff, and administers) are serious about fixing MIT's Koch problem, it will require a change of mindset for each of us. We must, each of us, be willing to step up to the line and take the risk, devote our time, leadership, and resources to actions that bring about meaningful change in the MIT-Koch relationship.

Such actions can include writing letters, holding meetings, organizing alumni groups in all parts of the country, making news headlines about the issue, inviting speakers to alumni club

events (such as Nancy MacLean, Jane Mayer, Christopher Leonard, Anne Nelson, and Ralph Wilson) who have studied the issue in depth. Those living close to MIT can march on campus, picket and boycott the Koch Café, and flood the area with anti-Koch bumper stickers. Further, we can all boycott products made by Koch-related companies (Appendix E).

It is an insult to MIT's alumni who contribute money to the Institute to find it used alongside Koch money. Ironically, one of the finest and most loyal things an alumnus can do for our beloved Institute, our country and the world is to terminate all financial support to an MIT which honors individuals and organizations that are leading deniers of climate change and are actively engaged in undermining our democracy – and to inform MIT of the reason for such actions. This included cancelling bequests through the Catherine Dexter McCormick Society. Contribute, instead, to organizations that are opposing the Kochs' agenda. (Note Appendix D.)

It is jarring to realize that our contributions to MIT are furthering the twin dangers the Kochs pose, and difficult to cease giving to the Institute we cherish. However, the withdrawal of alumni support, along with an outcry from students and faculty can have meaningful impact on the action of the Corporation Board. MIT Alumni Clubs can play a key role in terminating support for MIT/Kochs. Anti-Koch groups have already sprung up (Google "UnKoch MIT.").

This paper has no value unless it moves the MIT family -- each one of us – to go beyond studying the problem, and take it upon themself to actually act. MIT has gotten onto the wrong track. I would ask those who care about the Institute and want to help restore its good name and moral leadership to read the books mentioned in the Overview and Appendix, and then accept the personal inconvenience and risk associated with speaking up and taking action.

The Kochs' activities are real and their agenda is being enacted. It will take personal courage, selflessness, and commitment, particularly on the part of each of MIT's board members and administrators, to stand up against the prevailing tide. No longer should we listen to the lure of believing what we prefer while ignoring the obvious truth. This rests with each of us. I'm hopeful that every member of MIT's family has the personal courage and integrity to reevaluate how they use their talents, their assets and their life, and to stand up, put themself on the line, and take immediate action as they are able.

We must focus not on the difficulty or cost of taking action, but on the disaster to our planet and to our democracy that occurs if the Kochs succeed because our planet *is* warming and our democracy *is* slipping away and, sadly, MIT is assisting in those outcomes. MIT's previous president L. Rafael Reif stated, "At MIT we believe in looking at the facts, no matter how painful" – nice words, but did he speak for the board? Time is running out. The Kochs have shown their true colors. MIT must sever all relations with the Kochs and their network of organizations and divest in all Koch businesses, and do so *publicly*; MIT's alumni must take the lead. We must reorient our loyalty from our alma mater to the larger loyalty to our country, the world, and the future for our grandchildren.

Ideas and words are not enough; at the end of the day only our actions count.

See: **www.tinyurl.com/mitkochproblem** for easy one-click link to the Works Cited and the Appendix articles below.

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Appendix

A. Key Books

Democracy in Chains: The Deep History of the Radical Right's Stealth Plan for America. Penguin. 2018. Nancy MacLean.

Free Speech and Koch Money: Manufacturing a Campus Culture War. Pluto Press. 2021. Ralph Wilson and Isaac Kamola.

Dark Money: The Hidden History of the Billionaires Behind the Rise of the Radical Right.
Anchor. 2017. Jane Mayer.

Shadow Network: Media, Money, and the Secret Hub of the Radical Right.
Bloomsbury Publishing. 2019, Anne Nelson.

Kochland: The Secret History of Koch Industries and Corporate Power in America.
Simon & Schuster, 2020. Christopher Leonard.

The Big Myth: How American Business Taught us to Loathe Government and Love the Free Market
Bloomsbury Publishing, 2023. Oreskes, Naomi and Conway, Erik M.

State Capture: How Conservative Activists, Big Businesses, and Wealthy Donors Reshaped the American States -- and the Nation.
Oxford University Press. 2019. Alexander Hertel-Fernandez.

Freedom From the Markets: America's Fight to Liberate Itself from the Grip of the Invisible Hand. The New Press. 2021, Mike Konczal.

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B. Readings and Research Sites

The internet contains a wealth of information about the Kochs, their network and their activities. An internet search on the *titles* below should bring up the articles, or Click (sometimes twice) on the links.

Web Sites: [Click – sometimes twice -- to follow links]

See original evidence and documents supporting the Kochs' agenda:

- Koch Docs

Publications by the Center for Media and Democracy:

- SourceWatch
  - Profiles of Charles Koch and David Koch
  - Stand Together Chamber of Commerce
  - Koch Universities
  - Koch Exposed
- PR Watch
- ALEC Exposed
- Exposed by CMD

UnKoch My Campus Reports: Find by title on the internet or click (link)

Universities Dumping Koch at an Exponential Rate
Ralph Wilson. UnKoch My Campus. December 27, 2017. (link)

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A Student Review of FSU Gift Acceptance Policy: Undue Influence and the Charles Koch Foundation.
Ralph Wilson. *Progress Coalition* and *UnKoch My Campus*. May 2015. (link)

Violations of Academic Freedom, Faculty Governance, and Academic Integrity: An Analysis of the Charles Koch Foundation.
Ralph Wilson. *UnKoch My Campus*. July 28, 2017. (link)

Donor Influence at George Mason Finally Exposed.
Ralph Wilson. *UnKoch My Campus*. April 30, 2018. (link)

A Case Study in Academic Crime: The Charles Koch Foundation at Florida State University.
Ralph Wilson, Jerry Funt, and Sidney Norris. *Progress Coalition* and *UnKoch My Campus.* 2017. (link)

Donor Intent of the Koch Network: Leveraging Universities for Self-Interested Policy Change.
Ralph Wilson. *UnKoch My Campus.* December 2018. (link)

Exposing the Association of Private Enterprise Education (APEE): Charles Koch's Network of Weaponized Professors.
Ralph Wilson. *UnKoch My Campus*. May 2016. (link)

Insidious Gift: How the Koch Foundation's $25 Million Donation to Utah State University Aims to Dismantle Protections for America's Public Lands
Samantha Parsons and Ryan Beam. *Center for Biological Diversity* and *UnKoch My Campus*. October 2018. (link)

Faculty Resistance to Donor Influence
Ralph Wilson. *UnKoch My Campus*. (link)

Visualizations:

- Heat map of campus investments by the Charles Koch Foundation.
  Ralph Wilson. *Public Tableau*. 2017. (link)

- U.S. map of Koch funded operations.
  Eladio Bobadilla. *Duke University.* (link)

Relevant Articles: (find on the internet or Click to follow links)

Following is a sampling of relevant articles. The press and particularly the internet contain a wealth of information about the Kochs, their network and their activities.

Climate Change:

How MIT whitewashed the climate change denialism of a major donor, David Koch
Michael Hiltzik. *LA Times*. August 26, 2019. (link)

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The terrifying legacy of David Koch
Ryan Cooper. *The Week*. August 23, 2019. (link)

Scientific organizations must be braver in confronting climate denial
Geoffrey Supran. *Huffington Post*. September 3, 2016. (link)

Charles Koch must be held accountable for his climate disinformation campaign
Elliott Negin. *Independent Media Institute* and *Alternet*. March 31, 2022. (link)

How Charles Koch Purchased the Supreme Court's EPA Decision
Shaon Lerner. *The Intercept*. June 30, 2022. (link)

How Charles Koch Successfully Peddled the Snake Oil of Climate Change Denial
Andrew Koppelman. *The Daily Beast*. October 24, 2022. (link)

Climate change: ditch 90% of world's coal and 60% of oil and gas to limit warming to 1.5°C – experts
Daniel Welsby, James Price, and Steve Pye. *The Conversation*. September 8, 2021. (link)

David Koch Was the Ultimate Climate Change Denier
Christopher Leonard. *New York Times*. (link)

University Philanthropy:

`Koch brothers' higher-ed investments advance political goals
Dave Levinthal. *Center for Public Integrity*. October 30, 2015. (link), Updated May 7, 2018

The Secret Corporate Memo Behind Today's Guerilla War on Campus Progressives
Nancy MacLean and Lisa Graves. *Common Dreams*. August 25, 2021. (link)

Koch Pollution on Campus
Connor Gibson. *Greenpeace*. 2015. (link)

The Problem with Philanthropy
Sally Haslanger. *The New Statesman*. October 16, 2020. (link)

How the Koch Brothers Are Influencing U.S. Colleges
Dave Levinthal. *Center for Public Integrity* and *Time*. December 15, 2015. (link)

Two donors, two deaths, two responses
Kerry Emanuel et. al. *The Tech*. September 19, 2019. (link)

What's wrong with accepting dirty money?
Marc Goldman. *The Tech*. September 26, 2019. (link)

Alumnus on the sources of MIT's donations
Brian Gilligan. *The Tech*. October 3, 2019. (link)

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The struggle to democratize MIT
Rodrigo Ochigame et. al. *The Tech*. October 23, 2019. (link)

Koch network warns of 'McCarthyism 2.0' in conservative efforts to harass professors
James Hohmann. *Washington Post*. January 8, 2018. (link)

Koch's Latest Distraction: False Transparency. Koch Pledges to Continue hiding Decades of influence
Ralph Wilson. *UnKoch My Campus*. July 24, 2018. (link)

Epstein's donations to universities reveal a painful truth about philanthropy
Susan Svrluga. *Washington Post*. September 8, 2019. (link)

Time for MIT to Kick its Koch Habit
Sam Shamus. *Positive Peer Pressure*. May 6, 2016. (link)

Boston College students and faculty push to reject Koch funding — and Koch values
Aysha Khan. *Religious News Service*. November 19, 2019. (link)

America's Campuses Need to Distance Themselves from the Koch-Funded Insurrection
UnKoch My Campus. May 6, 2021. (link)

Activists Are Pushing to Remove Donor Influence from College Campuses
Eleanor Bader. *Truthout*. March 9, 2019. (link)

The fossil fuel industries' invisible colonization of academia
Benjamin Franta and Geoffrey Supran. *The Guardian*. March 13, 2017 (link)

The Koch effort at Wellesley will be overhauled after public attention
Annie Linskey. *The Boston Globe*. March 27, 2018 (link)

Suffolk University cuts ties with conservative research group.
Laura Krantz. *The Boston Globe* (link)

Koch Funding of Universities Topped $100 million in 2019
David Armiak. *Center for Media and Democracy*. November 23, 2020. (link)

Students at MIT Extend their protests to Koch and demand more resignations
IBL News. October 10, 2019. (link)

MIT should do better
Hossian Askari. *Huffpost*. June 14, 2017. (link)

K12 Education:

Millions of Students Are Quietly Being Taught the Koch Brothers' Whitewashed Version of Black History
Michael Harriot. *The Root*. March 14, 2018. (link)

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Koch Network Pushes Deceitful Textbook on Cash-Strapped Schools
Dee Maitland. *Truthout*. February 22, 2019. (link)

Koch network poised to scale up efforts to remake k-12 education with a pilot project in five states
Joanie Greve. *Washington Post*. January 29, 2019. (link)

Betsy DeVos Uses Our Taxes for Koch Brothers' Agenda
Jeff Bryan. *Truthout*. December 5, 2018. (link)

Where Does the Bizarre Hysteria About 'Critical Race Theory' Come From? Follow the Money!
Isaac Kamola. *Inside Higher Ed*. June 3, 2021. (link)

The Right Has Expanded Its Dark Money Strategy for Dominating School Boards
Alyssa Bowen. *Truthout*. December 9, 2022. (link)

Dark Money Is Driving Today's "Concerned Moms" Attacking Anti-Racism in Schools
Alyssa Bowen and Jessie Daniels. *Truthout*. November 21, 2021 (link)

Democracy & Voting Rights:

The Billionaire Kingmaker (Still) Dividing the Nation. Despite a rebrand, Charles Koch won't stop until U.S. democracy is dead.
Nancy Maclean, Lisa Graves. *The Progressive Magazine*. January 3, 2023 (link)

How the Koch brothers broke democracy & stuck taxpayers with the bill.
Steve Hanley. *CleanTechnica*. December 11, 2018. (link)

The Danger of an Article V Constitutional Convention:

Stopping a Dangerous Article V Convention
Common Cause. (link)

Kochs Bankroll Move to Rewrite the Constitution
Alex Kotch. *BillMoyers.com*. March 27, 2017. (link)

"Everyone should be frightened": Historian waves red flag over far-right plans to alter the Constitution
Tom Boggioni. Raw Story. September 12, 2022. (link)

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The Inescapable Casino
Bruce M. Boghosian. *Scientific American*. Vol 321, No 5, pg. 70-77. November 2019. (link)

Meet the Economist Behind the One Percent's Stealth Takeover of America
Lynn Parramore. *Institute for New Economic Thinking*. May 31, 2018. (link)

Private gain must no longer be allowed to elbow out the public good
Dirk Philipsen. *Aeon*. April 24, 2020. (link)

Misinforming the majority: a deliberate strategy of right-wing libertarians
Mark Karlin. *Truthout*. July 9, 2017. (link)

Explaining 21st-century capitalism in a way everyone can understand
Richard D. Wolff. *Counterpunch*. August 23, 2021. (link)

Met the hidden architect behind America's racist economics
Lynn Parramore. *Institute for New Economic Thinking*. May 30, 2018. (link)

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Alan Zibel. Public Citizen. November 30, 2017. (link)

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David A. Super. *American Constitution Society*. June 19, 2019. (link)

The Koch Coup: Charles Koch's Political Machine Bankrolled Senators Who Will Attempt to Steal Election for Trump Tomorrow
Alex Kotch and David Armiak. *Center for Media and Democracy*. January 5, 2021. (link)

As Koch Industries continues business in Russia, Koch-backed groups oppose sanctions
Popular information. March 14, 2022. (link)

Charles Koch Should Be on the Presidential Debate Stage Tonight, Not Donald Trump
Pam Martens and Russ Martens. *Wall Street On Parade*. October 22, 2020. (link)

ALEC and Koch Brothers Want to Gerrymander the Senate
Mary Bottari and David Armiak. *BillMoyers.com*. July 18, 2017. (link)

What the Koch Brothers Have to Do with the Flint Water Crisis
Cassady Craighill. *Greenpeace*. March 5, 2016 (link)

Backgrounder on the Supreme Court, Judge Amy Barrett, Trump Advisor Leonard Leo, and Billionaire Charles Koch
Lisa Graves. *True North Research*. October 26, 2020. (link)

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Bill Moyers. *Moyers & Company*. 2012. (link)

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The Billionaire Behind Efforts to Kill the U.S. Postal Service
Lisa Graves. *In the Public Interest*. July 9, 2020. (link)

Koch Document Reveals Laundry List of Policy Victories Extracted from the Trump Administration Lee Fang and Nick Surgey. *The Intercept*, February 25, 2018. (link)

David Koch's real legacy is the dark money network of rich right-wingers
Michael Holtzik. *LA Times*. August 23, 2019. (link)

Trump's Cabinet choices reflect deep Koch influence
Lyndsey Gilpin. *High Country News*. December 15, 2016. (link)

Koch Data Mining Company (I360) Helped Inundate Voters with Anti-Immigrant Messages
Lee Fang. *The Intercept*. September 9, 2019. (link)

Misinforming the Majority: A Deliberate Strategy of Right-Wing Libertarians
Mark Karlin. *Truthout*. July 9, 2017. (link)

The Shadow Network (Council for National Policy) Is Not Going Away
Anne Nelson. *BillMoyers.com*. March 24, 2021. (link)

The symptoms that American culture is transitioning into a violent oligarchy
Thom Hartmann. *Alternet*. September 14, 2021. (link)

New Koch-funded toolkit has strategies to bankrupt unions
Mary Bottari. *PR Watch*. January 22, 2019 (link)

Charles Koch's big bet on Barrett
Christopher Leonard. *The New York Times*. October 12, 2020. (link)

The Koch brothers are smiling: the White House will be packed with some of their most loyal servants
Alex Kotch. *AlterNet*. January 9, 2017. (link)

Republican Attorneys General dark money group organized protest preceding capitol mob attack
Jamie Corey. *Documented*. January 7, 2021. (link)

This Republican "weird trick" could be fatal to democracy
Gabby Goldstein, David Daily. *Alternet*. September 27, 2021. (link)

New Documents show Koch subsidizing attacks on election law
Koch Docs. (link)

Right on Crime: Koch's Criminal Justice Agenda: Protect White-collar Criminals and Expand the Prison Industrial Complex.
Ralph Wilson. *UnKoch My Campus*. October 26, 2017. (link)

COVID:

Koch-backed group fuels opposition to school mask mandates, leaked letter shows.
Isaac Stanley-Becker. *The Washington Post*. October 1, 2021. (link)

Charles Koch network pushed $1 billion cut to CDC, now attacks shelter-in-place policies for harming business
Lee Fang. *The Intercept*. March 26, 2020. (link)

Right-Wing Dark Money Groups Seek to Undermine Biden's Coronavirus Response — with a Stark Human Cost
Evan Vorpahl. *True North Research*. December 1, 2020. (link)

Koch Business Practices:

8 disturbing ways the Kochs have amassed their fortune
Terrell Jermaine Starr. Salon. October 1, 2014. (link)

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Meet the Network Hiding the Koch Money: Donors Trust and Donors Capital Fund
Connor Gibson. *Greenpeace*. October 25, 2012. (link)

Time to wake up 277: Donors Trust
Senator Sheldon Whitehouse. *United States Senate*. December 9, 2020. (link)

Independent Women's Forum: Koch-funded group defends pesticide, oil, tobacco industries
Stacy Malkan. *U.S. Right to Know.* February 24,2020. (link)

The radical capitalist behind the Critical Race Theory furor
Jasmine Banks. *The Nation*. August 13, 2021. (link)

Who else is in the Koch brothers billionaire donor club?
Eli Clifton. *The Nation*. November 3, 2014. (link)

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Michael Hiltzik. *Los Angeles Times*. August 23, 2019. (link)

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Advancing White Supremacy through Academic Strategy.

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How Charles Koch is Helping neo-Confederates teach College Students.
Alex Kotch. *The Nation*. March 21, 2018. (link)

'Dark Money ATM of the Conservative Movement' Gives $1.5 Million to White Nationalist Hate Group.
Alex Kotch. *Center for Media and Democracy*. December 4, 2020. (link)

The Koch family's Nazi ties are more entrenched than you think
Meagan Day. *Timeline*. January 19, 2016. (link)

Kochs and prisons fund FAU professor with white nationalist ties, report says
Jerry Iannelli. *Miami New Times*. March 23, 2018. (link)

GOP-linked nonprofit funneled millions to white supremacists and Jan 6th organizers: report
Tom Boggioni. *Raw Story*. November 21, 2021. (link)

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C. Organizations in the Koch Network – Partial List

Compiled by Nancy MacLean. Most of these organizations are part of the Koch funded network.
[To read more, Click or search internet.]

ENLIST DONORS to amass a fortune to fund their effort:

- Institute for Free Speech (formerly Center for Competitive Politics)
- Club for Growth
- Donors Trust
- Freedom Partners
- Koch Seminar Network (the semi-annual donor summit)
- Philanthropy Roundtable

DEVISE STRATEGY, POLICY, AND TACTICS for each stage of the plan:

- American Enterprise Institute
- Americans for Tax Reform
- Cato Institute
- Mont Pelerin Society
- National Center for Policy Analysis
- Reason Foundation

RECRUIT AND TRAIN LARGE NUMBERS OF OPERATIVES to carry out the agenda:

- Bill of Rights Institute
- Charles Koch Foundation
- Institute for Humane Studies
- Leadership Institute
- Liberty Central
- Liberty Fund
- Young Americans for Liberty

Appendix

GAIN CONTROL OF A MAJORITY OF THE STATES

- American Legislative Exchange Council
- Franklin News Foundation

BREAK THE POWER OF THOSE WHO MOST EFFECTIVELY BLOCK THEIR AGENDA:

- Capital Research Center
- Center for Individual Rights
- Citizens United (the organization behind the court case)
- National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation
- Project Veritas

CONSTRICT THE ELECTORATE:

- Project on Fair Representation

Organizations listed in other categories also involved:

- Americans for Prosperity
- American Legislative Exchange Council

CREATE RIVAL IDENTITY-BASED GROUPS that exploit media "balance":

- Association of Mature Americans
- Concerned Veterans of America
- Generation Opportunity
- Independent Women's Forum
- Libre Initiative (aimed at Latinos)

SPREAD MISINFORMATION to advance their agenda where they are otherwise losing:

- American Encore (formerly Center to Protect Patient Rights)
- Citizens against Government Waste
- Competitive Enterprise Institute
- Heartland Institute
- Independent Institute
- Judicial Watch

SACRALIZE THEIR AGENDA by cultivating religious allies

- Americans United for Life
- Council for National Policy
- Concerned Women for America
- Faith and Freedom Coalition
- Focus on the Family
- National Right to Life Committee
- Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America

CREATE A GRASSROOTS PROXY ARMY— for pincer action with donors pressing from above:

- Americans for Prosperity
- Heritage Action
- National Taxpayers Union

TRANSFORM HIGHER EDUCATION, to undermine its obstruction and gain legitimacy:

- American Council of Trustees and Alumni

- Campus Reform
- Foundation for Individual Rights in Education
- Turning Point USA
- Campus base camps at GMU, Florida State University, Arizona State University, and others (Charles Koch Foundation now investing in over 350 campuses)

TURN GOP INTO A DISCIPLINED DELIVERY VEHICLE by using "the accountability play" of primary challenges to enforce compliance:

- Americans for Tax Reform
- Club for Growth
- Freedom Partners
- National Taxpayers Union

CHANGE THE LAW, THE JUDICIARY, AND CONSTITUTIONAL UNDERSTANDING to entrench the agenda:

- Cato Institute's Center for Constitutional Studies
- Cause of Action Institute
- Heritage Foundation's Edwin Meese III Center for Legal and Judicial Studies
- Institute for Justice
- Judicial Crisis Network
- Judicial Watch
- Landmark Legal Foundation
- Project on Fair Representation
- Rule of Law Defense Fund
- Scalia School of Law, GMU
- Washington Legal Foundation

MOVE THEIR AGENDA INTERNATIONALLY, FOR LASTING, GLOBAL SUCCESS:

- Atlas Network - 457 partner organization members operating in 95 nations
- Antigua Forum
- Mont Pelerin Society
- Students for Liberty

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Appendix D. Organizations Opposing the Koch Agenda

[To read more, Click or search internet.]

- Alliance for Democracy
- BlueGreen Alliance
- Brave New Foundation
- Center for American Progress
- Center for Biological Diversity
- Center for Media and Democracy
- Center for Public Integrity
- Corporate Genome Project
- Common Cause
- Corporate Accountability
- DeSmog.com
- Friends of the Earth
- Grassroots Global Justice Alliance

- Global Alliance for Rights of Nature
- Greenpeace
- Healthcare for America Now
- Indigenous environmental network
- Institute for Policy Studies
- International Forum on Globalization
- Move to Amend
- NAACP
- The other 98%
- People for the American Way
- Polaris Institute
- Public Citizen
- Ruckus society
- Sierra Club
- 350.org

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Appendix E. Koch Business Enterprises and Products -- Partial list

Businesses change and buy/sell product lines all the time so the items below are subject to change.

Koch Related Companies:

Matador Cattle Company
the Koch Chemical Technology Group
Koch Disruptive Technologies
Koch Minerals
Koch Energy
Koch Methanol
Koch Fertilizer
Koch subsidiaries -- investing, commodities trading, and ranching.
Koch Industries' Growth
Flint Hills Resources -- petroleum products, gasoline, diesel fuels, jet fuels, and oil products, as well as those related to polymers and other chemicals.
Georgia-Pacific -- Quilted Northern tissue, Brawny paper towels, and Dixie cups. Wall board, napkins, boxes, paper dispensers, and pulp.
Guardian Industries -- glass
Invista -- Lycra, Tactel, and Thermolite, as well as brands for outdoor gear, carpet (Stainmaster)
Molex -- electronics
Koch Ag & Energy Solutions – electricity, methanol, natural gas
Koch Pipeline Company -- Transports oil, refined petroleum, natural gas throughout Texas, Minnesota, Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Illinois.

Koch Products:

American Greetings
Angel Soft
Angel Soft Ultra
Brawny paper towels

Appendix

Dixie products
Insulair cups
Mardi Gras napkins
Perfect Touch cups, paper products
Quilted Northern
Sparkle paper towels
Vanity Fair napkins & paper towels
Zee Napkins
Georgia-Pacific Office products
Spectrum paper
Georgia-Pacific's enMotion paper towel dispenser
Georgia-Pacific's engineered lumber INVISTA Brands
INVISTA's PET polymer is used in oxygen-sensitive packaging for food and beverages.
ADI-PURE® Adipic Acid
ANTRON® Carpet Fiber
C12™ Intermediates
COMFOREL® Fiber
COOLMAX® Fabric
CORDURA® Fabric
DACRON® Fiberfill
DYTEK® Idea Intermediates
FLEXISOLV® Solvent Solutions
LYCRA® Fiber
LYCRA HyFit® Fiber
OXYCLEAR® Barrier Resin
POLYCLEAR® PET
POLYSHIELD® Resin
SENZAA™ Additive
STAINMASTER® Carpet
SUPPLEX® Fabric
SUPRIVA™ Fiber
TACTEL® Fiber
TECGEN® Garments
TERATE® Polyols
TERATHANE® Polyether Glycol
TERRIN™ Polyols
THERMOLITE® Fabric
TORZEN® PA66 Resin
AGROTAIN®, Koch Fertilizer Company

From MIT's Values Statement (Emphasis added)

We strive for the highest standards of integrity, and intellectual and creative excellence. We seek new knowledge and practical impact, ***in service to the nation and the world . . .*** *To*gether we possess uncommon strengths, and **we shoulder the responsibility to use them with *wisdom and care for humanity and the natural world.***

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And yet,

The destruction of our democracy for the benefit of the wealthy minority, and the denial of climate change are not merely the by-product of the Koch network's agenda, they seem to be its very purpose and intent. And MIT continues to honor the Kochs.

The free market is not a mechanism for arriving at truth; it is solely a mechanism for the pricing and allocation of goods and services. Misapplying the economic concept of free-markets to structures of government and politics is a sleight-of-hand being used (by the Kochs and others) to justify locking such a single economic theory into the Constitution, eliminating government regulation of business and weakening the voice of citizens. **Asserting the primacy of free markets as a solution to social organization is a monumental deception.**

A free market with zero redistribution is biased toward, and ***mathematically guarantees***, a concentration of wealth into fewer and fewer hands leading to a minority oligarchy. (*The Inescapable Casino*, Bruce M. Boghosian, PhD, Scientific American, November 2019)

The real threat posed by the Koch network is not political ideology but their determination to neuter our democracy and the voice of the citizens for their own gain by rewriting the Constitution to effectively and permanently change our form of government from a democracy to a minority oligarchy.

No political or economic ideology belongs in the Constitution – ever. *T*he Constitution must remain neutral.

None of MIT's innovative technologies will matter much if the Koch's agenda destroys our democracy or allows global warming to destroy our planet.

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